

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE ELEVENTH JUDICIAL
CIRCUIT IN AND FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

CASE NO: 2022-006441-CA-01

SECTION: CA11

JUDGE: Carlos Lopez

Everglades Foundation, Inc (The)

Plaintiff(s)

vs.

Thomas Van Lent

Defendant(s)

SENTENCING ORDER

THIS CAUSE came before the Court for the sentencing of Defendant Thomas Van Lent following the entry of the Final Judgment of Criminal Contempt on May 25, 2023 (the “Final Judgment”). On December 15, 2023, pursuant to Florida Rule of Criminal Procedure 3.840(g), the Court held an evidentiary hearing where Defendant was informed of the Final Judgment against him and given the opportunity to show cause why sentence should not be pronounced, including the opportunity to present evidence of mitigating circumstances. Defendant called seven character witnesses and testified on his own behalf. The Court having heard the evidence, judged the credibility of the witnesses, reviewed the record, considered the applicable law and arguments of counsel, and being otherwise fully advised in the premises, it is hereupon

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED as follows:

1. On May 25, 2023, the Court found Defendant guilty of indirect criminal contempt for intentionally violating this Court’s temporary injunction dated April 11, 2022, and for intentionally hindering the administration of justice. Indirect criminal contempt is a common law offense punishable “by fine or imprisonment, but the fine shall not exceed \$500, nor the imprisonment 12 months.” § 775.02, Fla. Stat. Where a judgment of contempt is entered by

the judge without impaneling a jury, like here, a sentence of imprisonment must be less than six months. *See Aaron v. State*, 284 So. 2d 673, 676 (Fla. 1973).

2. The Final Judgment details at length the Court's findings and conclusions supporting the conviction of indirect criminal contempt against Defendant, including the Court's determination that Defendant is not a credible witness. Based on the findings of the Final Judgment and the testimony during the December 15, 2023, hearing, the Court concludes that Defendant did not show cause why sentence should not be pronounced. Indeed, the Court finds that Defendant's testimony during the sentencing hearing was not credible. The Court further notes that Defendant did not show remorse or apologize for his contemptuous conduct.

3. Accordingly, the Court orders Defendant to serve a sentence of 10 days in the Miami-Dade County Jail].

DONE and ORDERED in Chambers at Miami-Dade County, Florida on this 28th day of December, 2023.

2022-006441-CA-01 12-28-2023 1:44 PM

2022-006441-CA-01 12-28-2023 1:44 PM

Hon. Carlos Lopez

CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

Electronically Signed

Final Order as to All Parties SRS #: 12 (Other)

THE COURT DISMISSES THIS CASE AGAINST ANY PARTY NOT LISTED IN THIS FINAL ORDER OR PREVIOUS ORDER(S). THIS CASE IS CLOSED AS TO ALL PARTIES.

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